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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/770,185	01/29/2001	Anthony Lawrence	4969	7308

7590

05/08/2002

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EXAMINER

FLORES SANCHEZ, OMAR

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3724

DATE MAILED: 05/08/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/770,185

Applicant(s)

LAWRENCE, ANTHONY

Examiner

Omar Flores-Sánchez

Art Unit

3724

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 1-2 are objected to because of the following informalities: "amil", "deivce". Appropriate correction is required.

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the first mail feed guide, adjustment speed means, an electric circuit must and radiation means be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

3. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, it is not clear what "a postage meter" encompass. Also, the recitation that the mail opener is for use with the postage meter makes it unclear if the postage meter is part of the claimed invention. It is not clear how the postage meter operate drive means.

In claim 3, it is not clear what structure is being inferred by "the second mail feed guide being located to guide an edge of a mail piece in engagement with the cutting device when the cutting device is in the operative position and to prevent engagement of the cutting device by the mail piece when the cutting device is retracted into inoperative position". What controls the cutting device? The postage meter or the second mail feed guide?

In claim 9, it is not clear what the term "adjustment speed means" encompasses.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. As best understood, claims 1-3, 6, 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by McFiggans et al.

McFiggans discloses the invention including a mail opener 60, a postage meter, cutting device 65, drive means 47, a print head 14 and an electrical circuit.

5. As best understood, claims 1-4, 5, 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Palma.

Palma discloses the invention including a mail opener, a postage meter, cutting device 106, drive means 47, a print head 22, mechanical interlocking means (see Fig.8), a cam 94, a movable member 86 and an electrical circuit (see Fig. 3 and 7).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. As best understood, claims 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Palma in view of Amakawa et al.

Palma discloses substantially as claimed except driven feed means. However, Amakawa teaches the use of driven feed means for the purpose of moving the

envelope. It would have been obvious to having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Palma's device by providing driven feed means in order to move the envelope out of the stamping and cutting device.

8. As best understood, claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Palma in view of Amakawa as applied to claim 7 above.

The modified device of Palma discloses substantially as claimed except speed adjustment means. However, the examiner takes Official Notice that the use of speed adjustment means is old and well known in the art for the purpose of controlling the production. It would have been obvious to having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Palma's device by providing speed adjustment means in order to increase or reduce the production.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Oussani, Clark, Igarashi, Estabrooks and Oussani, Jr. et al. are cited to show related device.

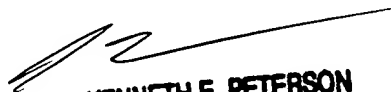
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Omar Flores-Sánchez whose telephone number is 703-308-0167. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Thursday between 8am and 5pm. If attempts to reach the examiner are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Allan Shoap can be reached on 703-308-1082.

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In lieu of mailing, it is encouraged that all formal responses be faxed to 703-872-9302. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.

ofs
May 6, 2002



KENNETH E. PETERSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER